



# AROUND NDE

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## State to Coordinate Employee Access to Information, Services and Work Functions

Adhoc teams are working at fever pitch to plan for the implementation of a technology gateway through which state employees will access information, services, and conduct some work functions. This gateway offers all State employees the ability to readily access commonly sought after information, forms, self-service actions, as well as other statewide software applications in one place, with a single password. This “one-stop shop” will include a broad mixture of functionality that is available statewide – some that is new, some that currently exists, but will be updated; and, additional functions that will remain the same, but be housed and accessed in a new location.

One technology system, the Talent Management Software Solution, will be phased in over the next few years, but ultimately reside within the gateway and as new features are provided to employees, they can be found on the gateway. The implementation plans are currently being developed and are subject to change; however, here's a snapshot of what will eventually be available through the new gateway.

- A new system to recruit and track applicants for state jobs. (Summer 2010 implementation).
- Having new employees complete many “on-boarding” tasks on-line, such as completion of forms, viewing welcome

messages, and reviewing benefit information. (Summer 2010)

- On-line training and development, which will include training developed by the agency as well as courses available for purchase on a large variety of topics. (Fall 2010)
- Employees will be able to set performance goals, document achievements, and be given credit for learning and development. Supervisors will be able to check employees' goal progress, complete the performance appraisal document, and assist employees with their long-term career goals.
- Agencies will be better equipped to develop employees and plan for the future through the succession planning capability.
- Supervisors will be able to manage their direct reports' compensation and have new reporting functionality through a new compensation management function.
- Enterprise One functions such as accounts payable, employee self-service functions (e.g., paystub review, benefit enrollment).
- Opportunities to develop a professional network of contemporaries within the State.

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# CONSIDER A ROTH IRA

Savings for retirement through your workplace plans is one of the most tax-efficient ways to save and invest. That's because retirement contributions reduce your taxable income, giving you an immediate tax break. You're not taxed on gains in these accounts until you withdraw them in retirement, at which point the earnings will be taxed as ordinary income.

Depending upon your financial situation, you may want to consider adding a Roth IRA. What are the pros and cons of a Roth IRA?

## Advantages

- If money was converted from a Traditional IRA to a Roth IRA, the investor can withdraw up to the total amount of the converted amount so long as the money has stayed in the Roth IRA for at least five years.
- Withdrawals of capital gains (any earnings made on the invested amounts) are tax-free if the investor has reached 59 1/2 years of age.
- Direct contributions to a Roth IRA can be withdrawn tax-free and without any penalties since they have already been taxed when the contributions were made.
- Up to \$10,000 can be withdrawn from the Roth IRA to purchase a principal residence. Note: The Roth IRA owner must not have owned a home within the last 24 months to qualify.
- Contributions to a Roth IRA can be made even if the investor contributes to other retirement plans such as the 401K, 403b or qualified education savings plan.
- If the investor expects his/her tax bracket to be higher upon retirement, there is an advantage to making Roth IRA contributions now.
- The Roth IRA does not require minimum required distributions at age 70 1/2.
- Earnings from the Roth IRA are not taxable if withdrawn after five years of the establishment of the Roth IRA and the participant is 59 1/2 years of age at the time of withdrawal.



## Disadvantages

- Any contributions made now are NOT tax deductible.
- Eligibility for Roth IRA contributions are more strict than for the Traditional IRA.
- An investor must live until the total Roth IRA contributions are withdrawn to realize the full tax benefits.



## Enhancing Your Work Effectiveness

Do you feel like you're not making enough progress? Or perhaps you feel like you are always putting out fires rather than attacking your work in a more planful way. Try creating a to-do list to help you manage your time and effort more effectively.

Here are some tips for an effective to-do list.

- Put it in writing. You can use Outlook to manage your to-do list electronically. If you decide to use paper, use a planner or notebook as opposed to sticky notes and other notations that can easily become misplaced.
- Make your goals specific, measurable, realistic and positive.
- Prioritize your tasks with a simple code that conveys importance or urgency. See some examples below.

A = Most important	A = Must be completed that day
B = Important but not urgent	B = Must be completed within the week
C = Doesn't require immediate attention	C = Must be completed within the month
- Keep entries short and separate into categories both for work and for outside of work (e.g., health, relationships, finances).
- Review your to-do list first thing in the morning, and use the last minutes of your work day to plan for the next day.



## New Employees



**Katie A. Bieber**  
Office Associate III  
Curriculum, Instruction &  
Innovation  
February 8, 2010



**Lindsay Walker**  
VR Service Specialist  
Omaha - Downtown  
January 4, 2010



**Brook Harrie**  
VR Rehabilitation Specialist  
Fremont  
December 30, 2009



**Lyndi Wragge**  
VR Service Specialist  
South Sioux City  
January 4, 2010

Not Pictured

**Anita Schwartz**, VR Service Specialist-Lincoln, February 16, 2010



# Office Ergonomics

The recent training survey indicated an interest in office ergonomics. Please use the following information to evaluate your office ergonomics to ensure that your work area is as safe and comfortable as it can be.

Many of us spend a great deal of time working on our computers. Incorrect posture or office equipment that isn't positioned correctly can lead to problems. There is no single "correct" posture or arrangement of components that will fit everyone. However, there are some basic recommendations to consider when setting up a computer workstation or performing computer-related tasks.

Consider your workstation as you read through the tips below from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) office. Click on each link for more information.

## Good Working Positions



- Hands, wrists, and forearms are straight, in-line and roughly parallel to the floor.
- Head is level, or bent slightly forward, forward facing, and balanced. Generally it is in-line with the torso.
- Shoulders are relaxed and upper arms hang normally at the side of the body.
- Elbows stay in close to the body and are bent between 90 and 120 degrees.
- Feet are fully supported by the floor or a footrest may be used if the desk height is not adjustable.
- Back is fully supported with appropriate lumbar support when sitting vertical or leaning back slightly.

- Thighs and hips are supported by a well-padded seat and generally parallel to the floor.
- Knees are about the same height as the hips with the feet slightly forward.

Regardless of how good your working posture is, working in the same posture or sitting still for prolonged periods is not healthy. You should change your working position frequently throughout the day in the following ways:

- Make small adjustments to your chair or backrest.
- Stretch your fingers, hands, arms, and torso.
- Stand up and walk around for a few minutes periodically.

## Monitor Quick Tips

- Put monitor directly in front of you and at least 20 inches away.
- Place monitor so top line of screen is at or below eye level.
- Place monitor perpendicular to window.

## Keyboard Quick Tips

- Put the keyboard directly in front of you.
- Your shoulders should be relaxed and your elbows close to your body.
- Your wrists should be straight and in-line with your forearms.

## Mouse Quick Tips

- Keep the pointer/mouse close to the keyboard.
- Alternate hands with which you operate the pointer/mouse.
- Use keyboard short cuts to reduce extended use.



## Office Ergonomics

(Continued from page 4.)

### Wrist Rest Quick Tips

- Use a wrist rest to maintain straight wrist postures and to minimize contact stress during typing and mousing tasks.

### Desk Quick Tips

- Desk surface should allow you to place the monitor directly in front of you, at least 20 inches away.
- Avoid storing items, such as a CPU, under desks.
- Desks should be able to accommodate a variety of working postures.

### Chair Quick Tips

- The backrest should conform to the natural curvature of your spine, and provide adequate lumbar support.
- The seat should be comfortable and allow your feet to rest flat on the floor or foot-rest.
- Armrests, if provided, should be soft, allow your shoulders to relax and your elbows to stay close to your body.
- The chair should have a five-leg base with casters that allow easy movement along the floor.

### Telephone Quick Tips

- Use a speaker phone or head set for long conversations.
- Keep it close enough to avoid repeated reaching.

### Document Holder Quick Tips

- Documents should be at the same height and distance as the monitor.

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Source: <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/index.html> (1/2/10)

## NDE Training Survey Responses

HR recently sent an electronic survey to all staff members to collect information on the topic of training — training provided by NDE employees and training that you would like to see NDE provide to you. A brief re-recap follows below.

### Training Provided By NDE Employees

- 72 survey respondents indicated that they provide training
- Training topics range from training school personnel regarding various regulations and programs to orientation for new medical providers.
- The number of individuals trained each year ranges from 1 to 15,000+.
- The majority of training sessions offered each year are 6 or more.
- The number of training hours per session ranges from 1 to 40.
- Only six respondents indicated that training fees were charged (\$25 to several hundred dollars).

### Top Training Interests of NDE Employees

- Workplace ergonomics
- Conflict management
- Computer software

For more information about the survey responses, please click on the links below.

[Executive Summary of NDE Training Survey Results](#)

[NDE Training Survey Results](#)

## 2010 Open Enrollment Dates Announced

Begins: April 19, 2010 at 7:00 a.m. CT  
Ends: May 14, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. CT

Plan coverage and pricing information is not yet available.